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RUEHBJ/AMEMBASSY BEIJING PRIORITY 0331
RUEHBY/AMEMBASSY CANBERRA PRIORITY 0540
RUEHNE/AMEMBASSY NEW DELHI PRIORITY 0111
RUEHGO/AMEMBASSY RANGOON PRIORITY 0024
RUEHUL/AMEMBASSY SEOUL PRIORITY 0114
RUEHKO/AMEMBASSY TOKYO PRIORITY 0491
RUEHWL/AMEMBASSY WELLINGTON PRIORITY 0142

C O N F I D E N T I A L LISBON 000651

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SUBJECT: PORTUGAL: EU TO SEND STRONG MESSAGE ON BURMA

REF: STATE 29795

Classified By: Dep Pol/Econ Counselor Cari Enav for reasons 1.4 (b) and (d)

¶1. (C) Burma must improve its democratic reform and human rights efforts in order to be fully accepted into the global and ASEAN communities, MFA diplomatic advisor Cristina Cordeiro informed post on March 12. That is the "strong message" the EU plans to reiterate during the March 14-15 EU-ASEAN Ministerial Meeting. The EU common position not to isolate Burma, but rather exclude the highest levels of government from events, remains unchanged, Cordeiro said.

¶2. (C) Comment: Portugal shares the prevailing European view that engaging countries of concern is generally a more effective approach than isolating them. In the case of Burma, we do not expect the Portuguese will press for a change to the current EU common position during their Presidency, despite post's urging to support tougher action. Hoffman